

Miscellaneous Provisions

This section includes all other types of travel expenditures not previously mentioned in this guide.

Incidental expenses

Receipts are not required to be included in the supporting documentation for the reimbursement of an **incidental expense**. However, the documentation must include an itemization of the expenses incurred.

The supporting documentation for a reimbursement of a telephone call expense must **include** a determination that the call was related to state business.



Lost or stolen tickets or similar items

A **state employee** may be reimbursed for a ticket or similar item that has been lost or stolen only if the reimbursing agency determines that the loss or theft occurred despite the employee's exercise of reasonable care to safeguard the item.

If a state employee is reimbursed for a ticket or similar item, and the item is subsequently lost or stolen because of their failure to exercise reasonable care to safeguard it, the employee is liable to the agency for its value. [Texas Government Code Section 403.275\(1\),\(3\)](#)

Training seminars conducted by a state agency for its employees

To reduce travel expenditures, a **state agency** must use interactive television, video conference technology and telephone conferences to the greatest extent possible. [Texas Government Code Section 660.147\(a\)](#)

A **state employee may not** be reimbursed for a **travel expense** associated with a training seminar conducted by his or her agency for its employees, unless the agency's **chief administrator** or the administrator's designee certifies that the agency:

- does not possess interactive television or video conference facilities at the **designated headquarters** of the employees attending the seminar; and
- cannot purchase or **lease** those facilities at a cost less than the total travel expenses associated with the seminar; and
- does not have access to another agency's facilities at the same location. [Texas Government Code Sections 660.147\(b\)\(1-3\)](#)

Death of a state employee

If a **state employee** dies while conducting state business at a **duty point** outside his or her **designated headquarters**, a **state agency** may pay the expense of preparing and transporting the employee's remains and personal property to the employee's designated headquarters or another location designated by the executor or administrator of the employee's estate. If transport is to a location other than the designated headquarters, then the amount of the agency's payment **may not** exceed the amount that would have been paid for transport to the headquarters. [Texas Government Code Section 660.144](#)

The agency may reimburse the employee's estate for appropriate lodging and transportation expenses incurred by the employee at the duty point.

Packaged travel arrangements

If a **state agency** or employee purchases a package of at least two travel arrangements (i.e. meals, lodging, transportation, **incidental expenses**, registration fees), each type is reimbursable only to the extent it would have been reimbursable had it not been included in the package. The **travel voucher form** must separately state the cost of each type of travel arrangement.

Example

Joe, a state employee planning a business trip to Amarillo, finds a great deal for a packaged trip online. The package deal includes airfare for \$200, rental car for \$30 per day and lodging for \$90 per day. If Joe were to book the airfare separately, it would cost \$400. Reimbursement of each cost is limited to what would have been reimbursable if it had not been included in the package. For example, the applicable lodging rate is only \$85, so the additional \$5 spent on lodging is not reimbursable. When Joe submits his travel voucher for reimbursement, he will need to include documentation that states separately each type of travel cost combined in the package.

Discounts and travel expenses at no cost

A **state employee may not** be reimbursed for a **travel expense** unless the employee has incurred the expense. Therefore, a state employee **may not** be reimbursed for the value or cost of a discount on a travel expense unless the employee paid money to obtain the discount. If a state employee receives a discount as a benefit of making unrelated purchases or conducting unrelated business with the provider of the discount, the discount is considered to be provided free to the employee. This section further details discounts offered on travel expenses.

Discounts and travel expenses at no cost

Expenses must actually be incurred to be eligible for reimbursement

A **state employee may not** be reimbursed for a **travel expense** unless the employee has incurred the expense. For example, a state employee who receives free transportation or lodging in exchange for mileage, points or other non-monetary credits has not incurred an expense for reimbursement purposes.

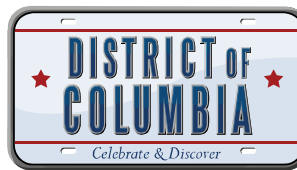
Discounts and travel expenses at no cost

Discounts for frequent use of a commercial lodging establishment

A 1984 opinion issued by the State Ethics Advisory Commission limits the use of travel discounts or bonuses earned from travel paid with public funds. Such a discount or bonus can only be used for a private purpose if it cannot be used for a public purpose. Each agency must determine whether a discount or bonus can be used for a public purpose.

Further clarification is given in the [Texas Penal Code Section 39.02](#), which criminalizes a **state employee's** misuse of government property or other things of value belonging to state government that come into the employee's possession by virtue of the employee's office or employment. However, this section also states that a discount or award given for travel, such as frequent flyer miles, rental car or hotel discounts or food coupons, are not things of value belonging to the government for purposes of the section. This is due to the administrative difficulty and cost involved in recapturing the discount or award for a governmental entity.

For more information about this subject, please contact the Texas Ethics Commission, the attorney general or other appropriate legal counsel.



Travel to Washington D.C.

State agency personnel that travel to **Washington, D.C.** for activities that involve obtaining or spending federal funds or that impact federal policies must inform the Office of State-Federal Relations (OSFR) about the trip. The agency must include information about the timing and purpose of the trip and provide OSFR with the name of an individual who may be contacted for additional information. [General Appropriation Act Article IX, Section 6.19](#) 